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Wednesday, December 6, 2017 metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

DANNY MASTERSON GETS THE AX

Netflix writes him off after mounting pressure over rape claims. 10

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WASHED AWAY

Years later, residents are still dealing with the aftermath of the West Philly flood. 4

SAM NEWHOUSE

WELCOME TO METRO PHILLY

KRISTIN TOUSSAINT, REPORTER

Hate clearing your driveway after a blizzard? One man is trying to make the winter season easier to handle for homeowners. James Albis created the app SnoHub as a way to order plow services on demand. Read more about how it works inside and at **metro.us.**

TRUMP INTENDS TO MOVE EMBASSY TO JERUSALEM

1 President Donald Trump told Palestinian and Jordanian leaders that he intends to move the U.S. Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, their representatives said, amid a growing outcry across the Middle East against any unilateral U.S. decision on the ancient city. Senior U.S. officials have said Trump is likely on Wednesday to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital while delaying relocating the embassy from Tel Aviv for another six months, though he is expected to order his aides to begin planning such a move immediately. The officials said, however, that no final decisions have been made. U.S. endorsement of Israel's claim to all of Jerusalem as its capital would break with decades of U.S. policy that the city's status must be decided in negotiations with the Palestinians, who want East Jerusalem as the capital of their future state.

TOUGH QUESTIONS IN GAY WEDDING CASE

2 The Supreme Court appeared divided with likely pivotal vote Justice Anthony Kennedy posing questions about a Christian baker's refusal to make a wedding cake for a gay couple but also questioning whether a Colorado civil rights commission that ruled on the issue was unduly biased against religion. The nine justices heard arguments in the major case on whether certain businesses can refuse service to gay couples if they oppose same-sex marriage on religious grounds. The case concerns an appeal brought by Jack Phillips, a baker who runs Masterpiece Cakeshop in the Denver suburb of Lakewood, of a state court ruling that his refusal violated a Colorado anti-discrimination law. Kennedy raised concerns about issuing a ruling siding with the baker that would give a green light to discrimination against gay people.

5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

VENTURA FIRE

3 A home is destroyed by brush fire as Santa Ana winds help propel the flames to move quickly through the landscape on Tuesday in Ventura, California

GETTY IMAGES

RUSSIA BANNED FROM 2018 WINTER OLYMPICS

4 Russia has been banned from the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics after evidence emerged of widespread doping but some of its athletes will be allowed to compete under the tag of "Olympic Athlete of Russia", the IOC said on Tuesday. The International Olympic Committee also decided to suspend Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) president Alexander Zhukov as an IOC member given that his membership is linked to his position as chief of the ROC who have been suspended from the Games. Russian Deputy Prime Minister Vitaly Mutko was also banned from any future participation at the Olympic Games. The IOC told a news conference that the Schmid report confirmed "the systematic manipulation of the anti-doping rules and system in Russia."

DOJ CONSIDERS POSSIBLE 'BUMP STOCKS' BAN

5 The U.S. Justice Department said that it is considering a possible ban on certain bump stocks, the attachments that make semiautomatic rifles fire faster and were used in the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history in Las Vegas in October. The Las Vegas gunman's use of bump stock to allow his weapons to fire like fully automatic machine guns, has led to rare bipartisan agreement in Congress on the need to review whether they should be banned. "Possessing firearm parts that are used exclusively in converting a weapon into a machine gun is illegal, except for certain limited circumstances," U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) said in a joint statement. "Today we begin the process of determining whether or not bump stocks are covered by this prohibition."

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Half a million dollars for flood-soaked West Philly homes not enough: Locals

City has paid some $500k to residents hit by the 2015 flood.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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Robert Johnson, 70, looks out over the strip of Wyalusing Avenue in West Philly that passes before his porch with disappointment.

It has been more than two years since the morning of June 14, 2015, when a 130-year-old, 36-inch-diameter water main near 52nd and Wyalusing burst and flooded the area around the intersection with several feet of water.

But Johnson says he's still living with the consequences of that day.

"As it stands right now, I don't have use of my plumbing facilities, my kitchen shed shifted, the doorway has deteriorated, the basement steps are very dangerous, there's mold in the basement," Johnson said outside his West Philly house.

"Psychologically, it's taken a toll," added Johnson, who bought his home on Wyalusing Avenue just months before the flood — the third to occur in the area in the last three decades. "The day of the flood, the mayor [in 2015, Michael Nutter] stood here personally and said, 'We're going to do everything we can to make you whole.' And that hasn't happened."

Residents and property-owners affected by the flood from the water main breaking open for about four hours early on a Sunday morning went on to file about 100 claims for damages against the city.

But under a law called the Political Subdivision Tort Claims Act, the city's liability in accidents like this flood is limited to $500,000.

For Johnson, that's bad news. When he filed a claim just before the June deadline for suits related to this incident — which he says was delayed due to problems with his first attorney — he got a response that the city had already hit its cap for funds.

"The city of Philadelphia has exhausted the cap on damages for the water main break incident," reads a letter from the city to Johnson's attorney, viewed by Metro.

Johnson acknowledged that he accepted about $4,000 right after the flood from the city, and has been offered another $6,000 to complete his claim. But he says that won't cover the damages to his home.

City officials confirmed they paid out $500,000 to settle some 200 claims related to the flood, with the median payment being around $1,660.

"The claims were resolved by settling them, paying a sum of money for the property damaged, abating mold alleged to be the product of the event or denying claims when there was not sufficient evidence to support the claim," a mayor's office spokesman said in an email. "In several cases, claimants did not accept the city's settlement offer."

Other neighbors said after three floods, in 1994, 2004 and 2015, they're expecting another any time. The Water Department did not respond immediately to requests for comment on the status of water mains in the area.

"There was 8 to 10 feet of water outside the homes, so imagine how much was inside the homes," said Fallon Postell, 35, a massage therapist and lifelong resident of the block. "We're talking about water — one of the most damaging forces on earth."

Postell said she didn't get any compensation for damages because her home was still being transferred into her name from her late grandmother's, and some back taxes were owed. But she said she hopes to be more prepared for a flood in the future.

"While it's a terrible thing that happened, it's a learning experience," Postell said. "We're taking it day by day, fixing our homes, just making the process our own for the next time, because we all know there will be a next time."

Robert Johnson, 70, discusses damages from a June 2015 flood to his home on Wyalusing Avenue. SAM NEWHOUSE

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SEPTA gets new dogs from local stray-to-K9 nonprofit called Throw Away Dogs

Kilo, a K-9 that has been donated to SEPTA. COURTESY OF THROW AWAY DOGS

Throw Away Dogs is donating two new dogs to help SEPTA police protect commuters and staff.

SAM NEWHOUSE
@scnewhouse
sam.newhouse@metro.us

The two newest officers on SEPTA's K-9 police squad don't have your average police dog's backstory.

That's because Tico and Kilo were both formerly stray dogs who wound up trained and recruited by Throw Away Dogs, a local nonprofit dog-training program that turns strays into K-9s.

The new dog-cops graduated Tuesday at the Penn Vet Working Center, where both dogs got patrol training and were officially donated to SEPTA. On Wednesday, the dogs will be "hitting the streets of Philadelphia to protect our citizens of this amazing city," according to Throw Away Dogs.

Since their founding back in 2014, Throw Away Dogs has donated 20 formerly stray working dogs to police departments around the country, mostly German shepherds and some Belgian Malinois.

High-energy dogs can be trained to become K-9s specializing in tasks ranging from patrol to searching for things like explosives, narcotics, prison contraband and cadavers.

"We're saving a dog, then we're saving the department money, but what's happening after that is we're making a difference in the communities," is how Throw Away Dogs co-founder Carol Skaziak summed up the program to Metro. "This is huge. This is completely repurposing an animal, with a great outcome."

They've also risen to national prominence, even being included in "dog whisperer" Cesar Milan's new show "Dog Nation."

They've also encountered some inevitable tragedies. Earlier this year, K-9 Winchester, the SEPTA police dog (not trained by Throw Away Dogs, but himself a former stray) who inspired the Throw Away Dogs program, unexpectedly passed away on Sept. 26.

"Because of him we are doing great things and changing the lives of many," Skaziak said of Winchester.

To learn more, visit throwawaydogsproject.com.

Throw Away Dogs co-founder Carol Skaziak with K-9 Tico. COURTESY OF THROW AWAY DOGS

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Savannah Pharo, 23, has been charged with murder. PPD

Police charge woman in stabbing death of 65-year-old man in South Philly

Savannah Pharo, 23, is charged with the murder of Michael Massaro.

SAM NEWHOUSE
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sam.newhouse@metro.us

A 23-year-old woman is charged with fatally stabbing a 65-year-old neighbor, police said.

Savannah Pharo, of the 700 block of Gaul Street in Fishtown, is charged with murder of Michael Massaro, who was found dead early Monday in his South Philadelphia home.

Police were called around 1 a.m. Dec. 4 to the 1200 block of Johnston Street, where they found Massaro inside the unlocked house, "lying on the floor suffering from a stab wound," the police report said.

Massaro was pronounced dead from the single stab wound to the chest at 1:36 am.

Police say they identified Pharo as a suspect and charged her with murder within 16 hours of the death.

They have not yet released a motive.

"We're not really sure of all the details except she was keeping him company and some kind of dispute ensued," Philly police homicide Captain John Ryan told Fox29.

POLITICS

Republican Party backs Senate candidate Moore: Official

The Republican Party will resume funding the Senate campaign of Roy Moore after President Donald Trump endorsed the Alabama Republican, who is accused of sexual misconduct against teenage girls.

The Republican National Committee has transferred $50,000 to the Alabama Republican Party in support of Moore, an RNC official said on Tuesday. No RNC staff have been deployed to the state.

The state party can use the money as they see fit, the official told Reuters on condition of anonymity.

The RNC cut ties with Moore last month after several women accused the former Alabama judge of sexual assault or misconduct when they were teenagers and Moore was in his early 30s.

Moore, 70, has denied the accusations. Reuters has not independently verified the reports.

On Monday, the White House said Trump had called Moore to give him his support. In a tweet that acknowledged the president's endorsement, Moore quoted Trump as saying, "Go get 'em, Roy!"

In a sign of the divide within the Republican Party around the allegations facing Moore, former presidential candidate Mitt Romney criticized Trump's endorsement, as did former RNC Chairman Michael Steele.

"Roy Moore in the U.S. Senate would be a stain on the GOP and on the nation," Romney tweeted.

Moore will face off with Democratic candidate and former U.S. Attorney Doug Jones in a special election on Dec. 12. REUTERS

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Analysis

The Greater Philadelphia region has one of the most highly concentrated college and university populations in the country. There are almost 100 higher-education institutions located throughout the 11 counties, with 440,000 students that attain about 90,000 degrees annually, making Greater Philadelphia a hub for highly intelligent and innovative thinkers.

Here at the Chamber, we believe that access to education across the continuum will assure that the Greater Philadelphia region benefits from an educated workforce to fuel our growth.

For over a decade, the Chamber has convened the Regional College and University Presidents' Alliance (Presidents' Alliance) which was created to explore cooperative opportunities among the region's many degree-granting institutions. The Presidents' Alliance is composed of higher-education leaders who commit their time and efforts to enhancing the talent in Greater Philadelphia. Working with the CEO Council for Growth (CEO Council), an initiative of the Chamber, the Presidents' Alliance leverages relationships with the business and civic communities which provides opportunities for collaboration, collective advocacy on issues critical to higher education, and the cultivation of new relationships between business and higher education leaders.

The collaborative efforts of the Presidents' Alliance, the Chamber and the CEO Council provide opportunities for higher education and business leaders to leverage combined strengths and to act with a coordinated regional voice. Throughout the year, these leaders organize periodically for shared learning sessions which are intended to identify challenges and discuss solutions is key to enhancing communication between those who are leading our region's future workforce.

On Dec. 11, the Chamber is hosting our fall Presidents' Alliance meeting which will be followed by a Higher Education reception from 5:30-7:00 p.m. at WHYY, 150 N. 6th Street, Philadelphia. This annual gathering is hosted by the Presidents' Alliance and serves as an exclusive networking opportunity for business and academic executives to meet each other and discover ways to strengthen our regional economy by leveraging our academic assets.

The two main focus areas of the meeting will be partnerships between higher education and the business community and best practices for supporting and educating the region's college students. The idea for this gathering is to allow college presidents to identify issues that are important to the business and higher education communities and discuss how each of these issues are being addressed.

If you are interested in becoming involved in the region's conversation on education, email me at rwonderling@chamberphl.com.

Ben Franklin Parkway and City Hall. GETTY IMAGES

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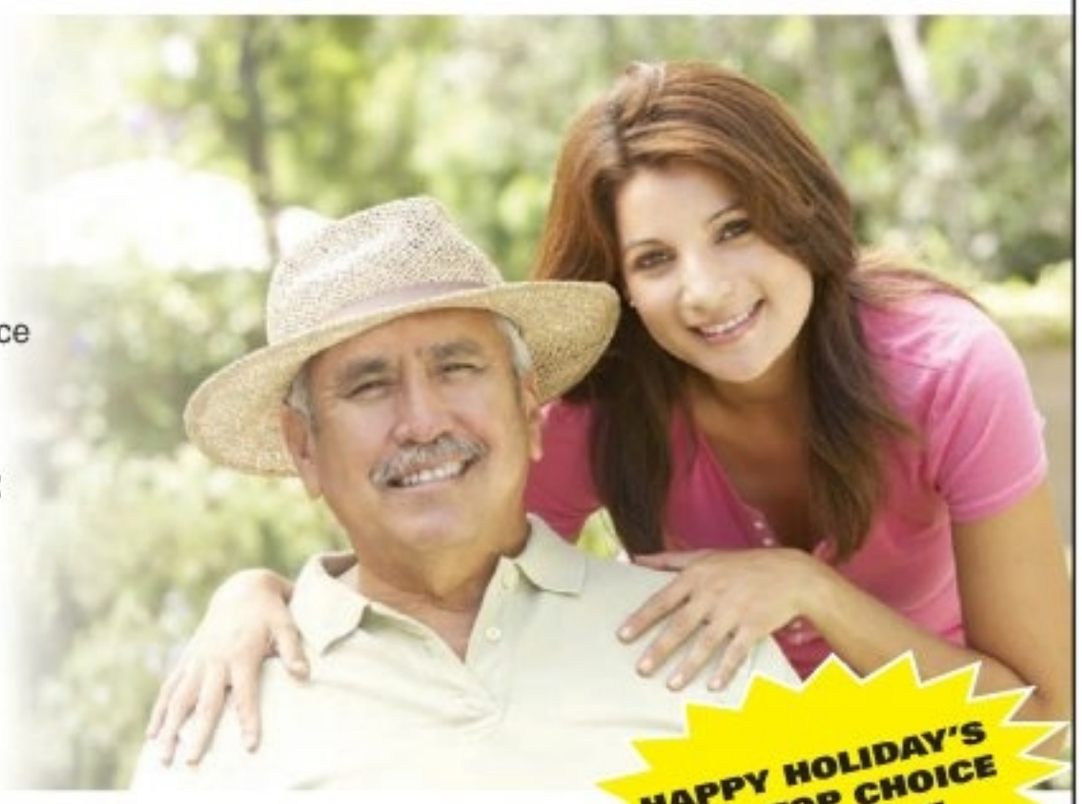

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Pence infuriated frat bros for telling dean where booze was hidden

Pence led the dean to the exact location the kegs were located.

LENYON WHITAKER
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

Vice President Mike Pence, who apparently was once a frat bro, once snitched on his brothers by telling the dean where they were hiding booze.

Dan Murphy, an old college buddy and frat brother of Pence at Hanover College's Phi Gamma Delta chapter, shared a story with The Atlantic about the time Pence let a college administrator know where they were hiding their kegs.

The year Mike Pence was president of Phi Gamma Delta, the movie "Animal House" had recently hit the theaters and the

VP Mike Pence was in a fraternity at college. GETTY IMAGES

fraternity brothers were always playing pranks on each other, throwing crazy parties and re-creating their favorite scenes from the movie.

One night, during a party that got a little out of hand, Pence and his frat brothers learned that the school dean was on his way to the house to shut the party down. Murphy told The Atlantic that Pence's frat brothers rushed to hide the beer kegs and plastic cups, but Pence met the dean at the door.

The dean told Pence he knew about the keg at the party, according to Murphy.

Usually when something like this happens, one of the frat brothers will take the blame to avoid having the entire house get in trouble.

According to Murphy, Pence did something different. Instead of allowing one of his fraternity brothers to claim the booze, Pence told the dean exactly where the kegs were located and also mentioned they belonged to their fraternity house causing, everyone to get in trouble.

"They really raked us over the coals," Murphy told The Atlantic. "The whole house was locked down," he added.

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Three Obama tweets (but none of Trump's) are some of 2017's most retweeted

During his first year in office, President Trump has concentrated on undoing key parts of former President Obama's legacy. But this is one he won't be able to reverse: Three of Obama's tweets rank among 2017's most retweeted posts, Twitter says. None of Trump's are on the list.

On Twitter's list of the "Top Nine Retweeted Posts of 2017," Obama occupies the No. 2 spot with a tweet from Aug. 12, the day of the racially motivated killing in Charlottesville, Virginia. "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin or his background or his religion," the former president tweeted under a photo of him greeting a multiracial group of toddlers gathered in a window. It has gotten 1.7 million retweets and 4.6 million likes.

Obama's second tweet on the list was sent Jan. 10. "Thank you for everything," he said. "My last ask is the same as my first. I'm asking you to believe—not in my ability to create change, but in yours." That earned 871,000 retweets and 1.9 million likes.

Obama's tweets proved more popular that Trump's in 2017. GETTY IMAGES

The third is from President Trump's Inauguration Day, Jan. 20. "It's been the honor of my life to serve you," Obama tweeted. "You made me a better leader and a better man." It got 631,000 retweets and 1.6 million likes.

One Trump-related tweet did make the list: NBA star LeBron James's "U bum" riposte to Trump's tweet that he had withdrawn Stephen Curry's invitation to the White House. "U bum @StephenCurry30 already said he ain't going!," James wrote Sep. 23. "So therefore ain't no invite. Going to White House was a great honor until you showed up!" That got 661,000 retweets and 1.5 million likes.

The top retweet of the year was the megaviral post in which a man named Carter Wilkinson asked the fast-food chain Wendy's, "How many retweets for a year of free chicken nuggets?" Wendy's replied, "18 million." Carter's response: "Consider it done."

Alas, he only got 3.6 million. As President Trump is learning, exploring Twitter's outer limits can only take you so far. MICHAEL MARTIN

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the word

Danny Masterson gets the ax

With mounting pressure over claims by four different women who accused Danny Masterson of rape, the 41-year-old Scientologist has been ousted from Netflix's "The Ranch." And he's not going quietly.

After a Netflix spokesperson released a statement about Masterson's dismissal from the series, the actor released his own statement to People expressing his frustration.

"I am obviously very disappointed in Netflix's decision to write my character off of 'The Ranch,'" he writes. "From day one, I have denied the outrageous allegations against me. Law enforcement investigated these claims more than 15 years ago and determined them to be without merit. I have never been charged with a crime, let alone convicted of one."

Worth noting, though, that the LAPD has been investigating sexual-assault claims against Masterson — and a possible Church of Scientology cover-up — since March.

Masterson can now add himself to the list of disgraced Hollywood men who used their positions of power to harass women. Have fun with your awful cronies, my dude.

Boy, bye.

INSTAGRAM/@KOREANHULK

This man is not Lilo's boyfriend

Surely, you haven't given a thought to Lindsay Lohan — perhaps not since the time she claimed she had been racially profiled. Nonetheless, we are here to report today that a man you have never heard of is not Lindsay Lohan's boyfriend. Thank you for your time.

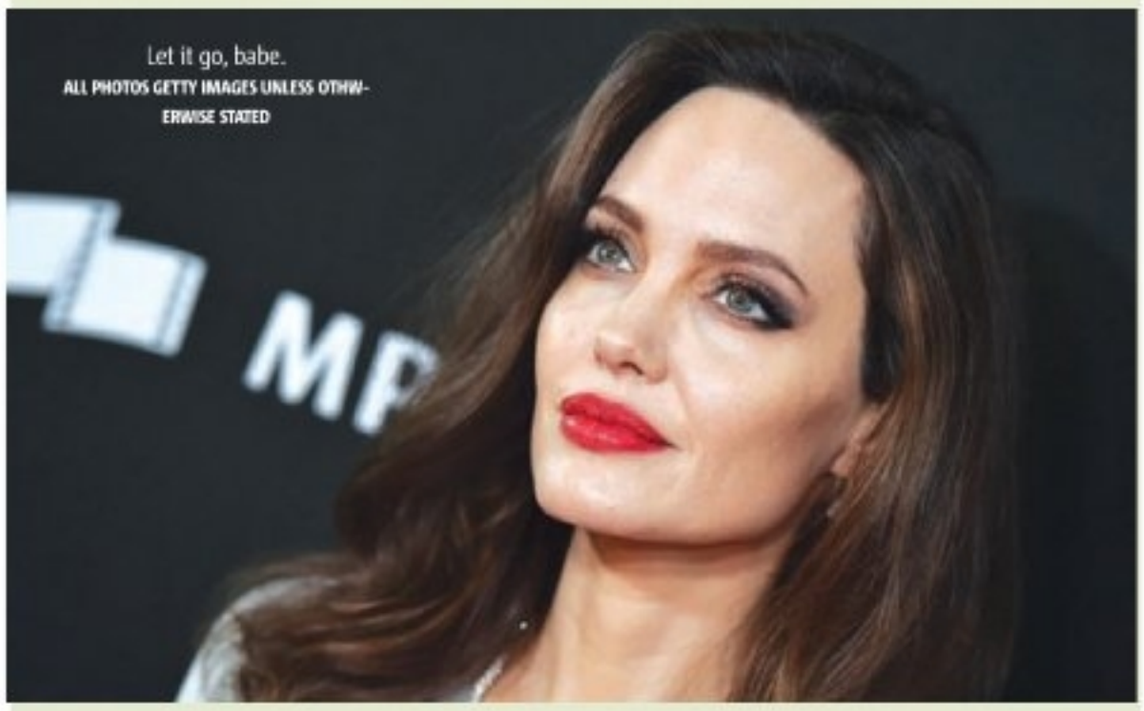
It's just Lindsay being Lindsay.

Though for a brief moment it appeared that the 31-year-old was dating very rich Korean bodybuilder Je-yong Ha, she is, um, not. The story originated from Liftn, a weight-lifting site, and spread through Twitter and Facebook. But according to one of Lohan's friends, it's strictly platonic.

"Lol they are 100% not dating at all. They're just friends," a source told Vanity Fair. Now that's how you make a statement!

For now, we can expect Je-Yong to continue to post pictures of himself in Lohan's company. That is, when he's not posting pictures of himself in overly-snug polo shirts on his private plane.

Angelina says words about Brad



Let it go, babe.
ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES UNLESS OTHWISE STATED

Angelina Jolie is making her way back into the spotlight. And you know what that means: She is talking about her ex-husband, Brad Pitt.

The 42-year-old actress admits that there was some "heaviness" between her and Pitt while they were shooting 2015's flop "By the Sea." She appears to have thought that filming together would save their marriage — but, uh, we all know the end to this story.

"I wanted us to do some serious work together," she said on The Hollywood Reporter's podcast, Awards Chatter. "I thought it would be a good way for us to communicate.

"In some ways it was, and in some ways we learned some things," she continues. "But there was a heaviness probably during that situation that carried on, and it wasn't because of the film."

No word if Pitt is still coping with Frank Ocean albums and sculpting, but we sure as hell hope so.

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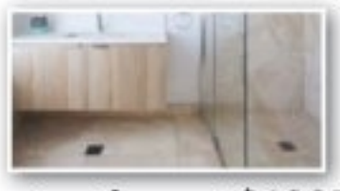

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Meet Why Don't We, your new

Why Don't We is ready to take over. JIMMY FONTAINE

The teen heartthrobs are hitting the road for Jingle Ball 2017.

MATT JUUL
@RunTheJuuls
letters@metro.us

Move over One Direction, there's a new boy band in town.

Jonah Marais, Corbyn Besson, Daniel Seavey, Jack Avery and Zach Herron of the group Why Don't We have quickly become bona fide pop stars and may be the hardest-working teens in music. In their first year as a band, Why Don't We has pumped out four EPs—as well as a Christmas record—and has amassed more than 100 million views on YouTube. Now they're hitting the road alongside Taylor Swift, Demi Lovato and others for Jingle Ball 2017.

Performing on the tour is a big deal for Marais, as the Minnesota native has attended the concert every year with his sister since 2009. The 19-year-old singer admits that it's surreal to share the stage with some of his favorite musical acts.

"I've imagined myself up on the stage a lot of times," Marais tells Metro. "Now that we're here, we're on this tour, it's a pretty crazy feeling."

While Why Don't We is the latest group to take up the boy band mantle, their sound is a bit more diverse than past pop crooners like New Kids on the Block or the Backstreet Boys.

Drawing influences from sources such as Ed Sheeran, Drake and even the Beatles, Why Don't We likes to dabble in a variety of styles. According to Seavey, their recently released holiday EP, "A Why Don't We Christmas," epitomizes their eclectic tastes, featuring everything from doo-wop to a capella.

"We're just making the music we love and doing it our way," Seavey says. "We're just doing it

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favorite boy band

The boy band performs at Jingle Ball in Philadelphia on Wednesday night.
ATLANTIC RECORDS

the Why Don't We way."

Along with musical styles, the band has taken a few other lessons from their favorite performers.

If you're wondering how a group of teens has found the movitation to create and release so much music in only a year, Seavey credits Drake for inspiring Why Don't We's work ethic.

"Drake is a big one for us," he says. "How much music he releases, we've tried to do that releasing four EPs in the first year of being a band. We've kind of taken on that challenge of putting out as much music as we can."

Above all, the band wants to follow in the Beatles' footsteps by remaining true to their sound, never being afraid to showcase their personalities on or off the stage.

"We take big influence from the Beatles, just looking at how they live their lives and how close they were together even as people," Besson says. "They weren't afraid to show their personalities, so we definitely take influence from that."

"We don't have someone telling us what kind of songs to put out or what kind of vibe we have to go for," adds Marais. "We want to put out the music that we want to drop. It's 100 percent us. Our sound keeps evolving."

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Throw a *hit* holiday dinner party

Celebrity chef Alex Guarnaschelli tells us her secret to stress-free hosting.

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Alex Guarnaschelli with her Woodbridge Toasted Spice Chardonnay Hot Toddy BOTH PHOTOS PROVIDED

Guarnaschelli's Cranberry Apple and Red Blend Crumble

One of the best parts about the holidays is sharing food and drink with close friends and family, but it's all too easy to let the stress of hosting overshadow the good times. We asked Alex Guarnaschelli, executive chef at Butter restaurant in NYC, "Next Iron Chef: Redemption" champion and author of the cookbooks "Old School Comfort Food" and "The Home Cook" her advice on how to make a great holiday meal for guests that you can enjoy yourself, too.

Prep ahead

"My parents had a lot dinner parties when I was growing up, but they missed out on a lot of them because they were cooking the whole time," Guarnaschelli recalls. Instead, get your appetizers and desserts done well ahead of time, she advises, so you can spend QT drinking and socializing with your guests. A simple cheese board, pre-made dips and crackers, or crudite give guests something to nosh on while you all have drinks and catch up.

Cocktail hour sips

Guarnaschelli likes to serve a light and refreshing, but potent, French 75 cocktail, rather than juice-heavy mixed drinks like Greyhounds or Screwdrivers, which run the risk of filling guests up before dinner. She fancies a simple syrup (a 1-to-1 ratio of water to sugar) simmered with lemon zest and fresh herbs like thyme or basil. Strain it and chill it, then mix with gin or vodka, crushed ice and seltzer, or hold the liquor and you have a flavorful soda for the kids or teetotalers to enjoy.

A main course crowd-pleaser

During the holidays, focus on preparing dishes that everybody will enjoy, says Guarnaschelli. She opts for comfort-food crowd pleasers, like roast chicken, hanger steak or roast beef, with sauces on the side, like a spicy salsa and a classic gravy, so guests can take their pick. Be sure to make a non-meat option to accommodate your vegetarian guests, like a whole roast cauliflower served with warm chutney.

A simple and sweet finish

Dessert-wise, Guarnaschelli likes to take a break from Thanksgiving's pie obsession and opts for a cookie platter or her Cranberry Apple and Red Blend Crumble, which are both easy to bake ahead. And word to the wise: "Don't undersell a classic chocolate cake — it never fails," she says.

Find recipes at Alexguarnaschelli.com and Woodbridgewines.com.

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MAYBE WE GOT AHEAD OF OURSELVES WITH 2017 EAGLES

OPINION

EVAN MACY
@evan_macy

Maybe the Eagles really aren't that good.

Yeah, they are 10-2. And yeah, up until Sunday night's 24-10 loss to the Seahawks they were the favorites in the NFC to win the Super bowl.

And yes, we know, they are a team that had prior fired off nine straight wins including five straight with 30 or more points posted. The defense is stout. The offense has weapons.

But if the playoffs started today, they would be the No. 2 seed in the NFC. They have yet to win the NFC East, and their strength of schedule, which is the reason they are the No. 2 team, has seen them lost two of three times they have faced a team with a winning record.

Their wins, against the Redskins, Giants, Chargers, Cowboys, 49ers, Bears, Broncos and Cardinals were cake walks. Their Thursday night win against the Panthers came on a short week, and in a weird form as always happens on the Thursday night game.

Second-year head coach Doug Pederson has shown that he is not consistently a voice of wisdom as he missed several opportunities — like failing to challenge an obvious forward pass on a third and eight that could have altered the game with Philly trailing by one score. And the second year quarterback continues to overthrow wide open targets at critical moments (when he's not fumbling the ball through the end zone).

This is not meant to overlook the incredible steps forward the team has made. Wentz will be an MVP someday and this team will win a Super Bowl. But the expectations are too high for a team this young and inexperienced.

They looked a little out of sorts against the powerhouse Seahawks and their 12th man. Week 14's duel with the similarly easy-scheduled and youthful Rams should be entertaining but will not resolve much. The Birds, without a home game in the NFC championship game, are vulnerable to playing in Minnesota or New Orleans and could make an earlier than expected exit in a chance to advance to the Super Bowl as the home team wins 80 percent of the time in conference title bouts. And another loss could slip Philly out of a first round bye, forcing them to play on the road even sooner.

Eagles fans should be excited. With Alshon Jeffery locked down long term and 20 of 22 starters set to return next year there are few teams with a brighter future. But that future need a stepping stone — and unfortunately for optimistic Eagles fans, 2017 is that step.

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Sixers' growing pains, like loss to lowly Suns, should be no surprise

The Sixers should have been able to handle Phoenix Monday night, but didn't.

ANDY JASNER
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sports@metro.us

Twitter is never a calm place.

After the 76ers game Monday night, Twitter was even crazier than usual, which is never normal anyway.

The Sixers lost to the Phoenix Suns, who had eight victories entering the game.

The Sixers were outworked, outclassed and outhustled.

Fans on Twitter were screaming about the game being a "bad loss," "disappointing" and "frustrating."

Let's remember this: The Sixers (13-10) are very much improved, but hardly ready for the NBA Finals. Veteran teams probably win this game against the Suns. The Sixers are not a veteran team. Joel Embiid and Ben Simmons are basically NBA babies, meaning they have very little experience.

This was a major learning experience.

Devin Booker scored 46 points and controlled the game in the second half. Fans on Twitter were yelling and wondering why the Sixers took Jahlil Okafor over Booker. Understandable.

As Hall of Fame coach Larry Brown has always said, "There's a team on the other side trying to win."

The Sixers simply can't show up and expect to win. It's going to take work. It won't always be easy.

All those losses during "The Process" weren't easy to stomach. Figuring out how to win can be difficult in the marathon NBA season.

Wow, was that evident against Phoenix.

"A game like this is without a doubt a missed opportunity," Sixers coach Brett Brown said after the loss. "When you have a goal to make the playoffs, we're all going to look at somebody that's like pick a number, 41-41 or 42-40 it's going to be that close. And you only have so many times that you're able to poke yourself in the eye. Tonight was one of those for us here at home and we walk out of this gym not feeling great at all about very much of what we did tonight."

Also lost in the defeat was this: Simmons played and did quite well despite having flu-like symptoms. The Sixers were without Justin Anderson and T.J. McConnell, two players who would have provided the necessary grit on a night like this.

Embiid and Simmons must grow up quickly and that's not easy. Yes, they're immensely talented. But they have so many levels to go this season and beyond.

The word "clunker" was also used on Twitter. Can't go there considering the Sixers haven't won anything yet. At 13-10, they're moving the right way. It's about continuing to move and understanding what's needed to compete every single night in the NBA.

"I don't know what it is a matter of," Sixers veteran guard JJ Redick was asked whether they overlooked the Suns. "They outplayed us tonight, competed harder than we did. Other than the Toronto game, that's not who we've been all season. That's not our team. We're all disappointed. That's not good enough. That's not our team. That's not who we've been. Can't give you a reason why. Whether it's we overlooked them. … I don't know. That was not our team."

It was Monday night.

Twitter exploded.

Doubt it will be the last time.

Joel Embiid continues to play like an NBA All-Star every night. GETTY IMAGES

Sixers' next gen stars

Joel Embiid — 23 ppg, 11.3 rpg, 1.8 bpg (in 29.9 minutes per game)

Ben Simmons — 18 ppg, 9.3 rpg, 7.1 apg, 1.8 spg (in 35.8 minutes per game)

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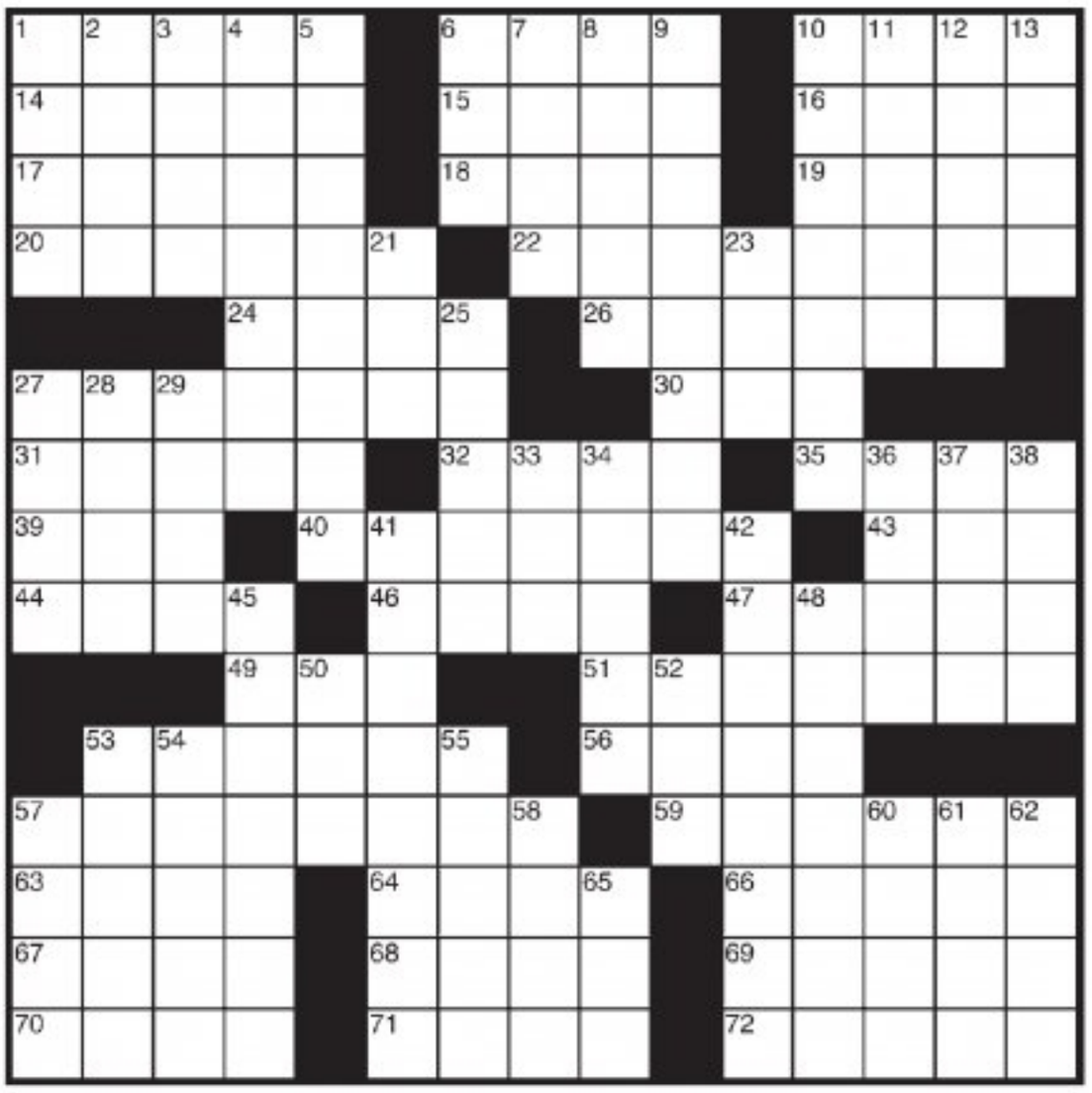
Across

1 Brother of one's father
6 Fuel material from bogs
10 Write on glass
14 Glitterati member
15 Auel heroine
16 Oliver Twist's request
17 Depart from permanently
18 Estate recipient
19 A Great Lake
20 Impassioned
22 Left
24 Darth's daughter
26 Harped on
27 Reacted to pepper
30 "Ulalume" poet
31 Playwright Oscar --
32 Experienced
35 Cummerbund
39 Wanted-poster abbr.
40 Garage jobs
43 Billiard stick
44 Mr. Roddenberry
46 Fawn's parent
47 Oman neighbor
49 Hirt and Gore
51 Horse's gear
53 Run of luck
56 Follow
57 Discussed
59 Not digital
63 Bogus butter
64 Stork cousin
66 Kennel noise
67 Meatloaf serving
68 Narrative of heroic exploits
69 Lithe
70 London park
71 Cough syrup meas.
72 Feel instinctively

Down

1 West Coast sch.
2 -- -do-well
3 Dressed
4 Made horizontal
5 Mr. Scrooge
6 Cry of disdain
7 Watched carefully
8 Sigourney Weaver thriller
9 Roofing roll (2 wds.)
10 Appears
11 Nut cake
12 Called out
13 Attention
21 Bind
23 In time gone by
25 Conform
27 Pirate's booty
28 Running shoe name
29 Vivacity
33 Bleat
34 Set ablaze
36 Peak
37 Hires a lawyer
38 Egg layers
41 Ralph Waldo Emerson, e.g.
42 Mock oranges
45 Hoop site
48 Make bigger
50 "Annabel --"
52 Rte. mappers
53 Witty remark
54 Tire surface
55 Shish --
57 Stylishly elegant
58 Sarcastic remarks
60 Steak cut
61 Wise old birds
62 Mirth
65 Drain, as energy



metro.us/sudoku

easy

2	1		7		5			
			4	2		7		
8	5		3	6				1
			5			4		
5				1				6
		9			2			
4				7	6		1	9
		5		9	3			
			1		4		7	8

hard

		2	8	1			4	9
9					2	1		
	7				5			6
3		5					8	
		1		5		6		
	6					2		5
8			5				3	
		4	3					8
5	3			2	8	4		

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries You'll face an unstable situation when dealing with partnerships. Let others air their grievances. Once you know where you stand, it will be easier to offer solutions.

Taurus Problems at home will erupt if you are spending too much time at work. Aim to achieve greater balance in your life. Being receptive to suggestions will avoid discord.

Gemini You'll face bullying or pressure if you get into a discussion with a colleague or an authority figure. Do your best to remain calm and avoid making an impulsive decision.

Cancer A relationship with someone you know through work will escalate quickly. Make sure you are clear about what's being offered before you share your thoughts.

Leo Your emotions will surface and excitement will set in. Enjoy spending time with the people you care about. Make improvements to your appearance or to special relationships.

Virgo Preparing your living space for the festive season is encouraged, but stay within your budget or someone will complain about your spending habits.

Libra You'll face opposition if you haven't abided by the rules. Be prepared to explain your point of view. Your power of persuasiveness will be required.

Scorpio Be careful sharing information. Make sure your facts are straight and do your best not to upset someone who is likely to cause problems for you in the future.

Sagittarius Emotions will be difficult to control when dealing with money and legal matters. Don't act in haste when you should be doing everything to get ahead.

Capricorn Getting together with old friends or attending a reunion will bring back fond memories. Revisit a proposed joint venture you have yet to start.

Aquarius Don't wait for a situation to backfire. Speak up and offer truth, justice and a solution that will prevent an unnecessary feud.

Pisces Be careful whom you choose to compete against. An emotional reaction will be met with a similar response that could end up costing you a friendship. EUGENIA LAST

Yesterday's answers

C	L	U	E	■	D	R	A	B	■	V	I	R	U	S
Z	A	P	S	■	E	A	R	L	■	E	M	O	T	E
A	D	O	S	■	C	I	N	E	■	I	B	S	E	N
R	E	N	E	G	E	D	■	U	G	L	I	E	S	T
■	■	■	N	O	I	S	Y	■	R	E	B	■	■	■
E	L	I	C	I	T	■	A	C	A	D	E	M	I	C
R	A	V	E	N	■	A	W	R	Y	■	S	A	N	E
U	S	O	■	G	A	R	N	I	S	H	■	Y	U	L
P	E	R	K	■	G	L	I	B	■	O	R	B	I	T
T	R	Y	I	N	G	O	N	■	T	W	E	E	T	S
■	■	■	M	I	I	■	G	R	E	T	A	■	■	■
I	N	T	O	N	E	D	■	O	P	O	S	S	U	M
C	A	I	N	E	■	O	B	O	E	■	O	L	L	A
E	P	C	O	T	■	L	I	M	E	■	N	U	N	C
S	A	S	S	Y	■	T	O	Y	S	■	S	E	A	S

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